



Andy, Matt and Nev step up a level

Earlier this month Australian National Director, Margo Koskelainen announced that Andrew Rindfleish (NSW) and Matt Gowty (NSW Currently) have been awarded a Level 8 Accreditation, while Neville Lawrance (SA) has been awarded a Level 7 accreditation.

All three umpires have done considerable work for the National Umpiring Program over many years of dedication and it is only fitting that they are awarded their Level 8 and Level 7 respectively.

Highlights of Matt's career include four World Series' 1997 Junior Boys; 2000 Senior Men; 2001 Junior Boys and 2002 Senior Women, while Andrew has also been to four World Championships, 1991 Junior Girls; 1996 Senior Men; 2000 Senior Men and 2001 Junior Boys.

Neville's career includes Under 18 NZ Tour (1995), Qantas Challenge Brisbane (1997), Open Women's Tour of Oklahoma and Columbus (1977), World Women's— Japan (1998), Men's World Qualifiers in Canberra 1999. Neville is currently the State Director of Umpiring in South Australia.

I take this opportunity to congratulate these three fine umpires on behalf of all the readers of Blue's News On-Line. I know many of us have been inspired by one of even all of these gentlemen during their careers.

WELL DONE ANDREW, MATTHEW AND NEVILLE

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ISF PRESIDENT CONCLUDES MEETING WITH IOC

A statement was issued recently by International Softball Federation (ISF) President Don Porter following a meeting in Lausanne, Switzerland with Dr. Jacques Rogge, President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), and IOC Director of Sports Gilbert Felli.

The focus of the trip was to discuss a recent recommendation by the IOC Program Commission to drop softball along with two other sports from the Olympics, beginning with the 2008 Games in Beijing.

As I did at the end of our meeting, I again thank Dr. Rogge and Mr. Felli for meeting with us and listening to the case we presented on why softball should not be eliminated from the Olympics, Mr. Porter said. We presented a wealth of information that refuted the concerns about our sport that the Program Commission's report cited. Dr. Rogge and Mr. Felli were very attentive, and our focus now has to be on communicating those same facts to the IOC members, some of whom already pledged their support to us.

Mr. Porter noted that Dr. Rogge indicated that no decision will be made prior to the IOC's meeting in Mexico City at the end of November.

"We're comfortable with that and how the discussion went, and are going to continue our efforts to raise awareness of why our sport is of Olympic calibre," Mr. Porter said.

Some of the items highlighted during the meeting, which the ISF continues to trumpet, are the sport having ranked fifth in TV rating averages for top women's events in softball's debut appearance at the 1996 Olympic Games and then fourth in 2000, 60% of Olympic venues having been more costly than that for softball at the Games in Sydney two years ago, and the almost one million dollars (U.S.) in softball equipment the ISF has provided to over 50 countries in the last four years.

Mr. Porter was joined at the meeting by ISF Secretary General Andy Loechner, ISF 1st Vice President Clovis Lodewijks, ISF Vice President/Europe Ramaz Goglidze, ISF Vice President/Europe Pavel Prachar, and Ms. Alma Neville, President of the British Softball Federation. Mr. Porter will now travel to Korea for the 14th Asian Games, which include women's softball.

For more information, please contact ISF Director of Communications Bruce Wawrzyniak at brucew@internationalsoftball.com, 813-864-0100, ext. 229, or 813-478-3702 (cellular).

Larterthe best
Medicine



There is always
time to laugh!

The Domestic Engineer fights back

One afternoon a man came home from work to find total mayhem in his house.

His three children were outside, still in their pyjamas, playing in the mud with empty food boxes and wrappers strewn all around the front yard. The door of his wife's car was open, as was the front door to the house.

Proceeding into the entry, he found an even bigger mess. A lamp had been knocked over, and the throw rug was wadded against one wall. In the front room the TV was loudly blaring a cartoon channel, and the family room was strewn with toys and various items of clothing.

In the kitchen, dishes filled the sink, breakfast food was spilled on the counter, dog food was spilled on the floor, a broken glass lay under the table, and a small pile of sand was spread by the back door.

He quickly headed up the stairs, stepping over toys and more piles of clothes, looking for his wife. He was worried she may be ill, or that something serious had happened.

He found her lounging in the bedroom, still curled in the bed in her pyjamas, reading a novel. She looked up at him, smiled, and asked how his day went.

He looked at her bewildered and asked, "What happened here today?"

She again smiled and answered, "You know every day when you come home from work and ask me what in the world I did today?"

"Yes" was his incredulous reply.
She answered, "Well, today I didn't do it!"

ATTENTION ALL BLUE'S
Mizuno Base Brush and Wallet \$30.00 (inc GST & Postage)

Available from ASF Office from October 4

ONLY 100 available—First in, best dressed



Rules Challenge

Big Al's Tester

This month's teaser deals with an Illegal Pitcher (resulting from being removed from the pitching position as a result of exceeding the defensive conference limit) returning to the pitching position and delivering a pitch.

Questions:

Is this an Appeal Play by the offensive side only, or should/can the umpire, once the pitcher has pitched the ball (or the umpire becomes aware of the situation), remove him from the game?

Should the umpire intervene after a pitch has been delivered, as by doing so, it takes away the right of the offensive team to seek the penalty for the illegal act (substitution) at a time of their choosing?

Is the positional change on the Illegal Pitcher returning to the pitching position treated as an Illegal Substitution?

Answers:

First of all, it is NOT an Appeal Play. Rule 1 Section 2 & POE 2 of the 2002-2005 Rulebook lists the types of appeal plays and the incidence of an Illegal Pitcher returning to pitch is not one of them.

Secondly, if the umpire has been doing his job properly and noted his line-up card at the time the pitcher was declared an Illegal Pitcher, he should use preventative umpiring to prevent the positional change from being made. If the coach then insists on the change being made, the umpire would allow the pitch and then EJECT the Illegal Pitcher immediately.

The umpire should eject the Illegal Pitcher as soon as one pitch has been thrown, or as soon as he is aware (by any means) that the Illegal Pitcher has returned to pitch and at least one pitch has been thrown. The rule is not designed to allow for the offensive team to delay advising the umpire to suit their own needs.

The positional change is not classed as an Illegal Substitution, unless the declared Illegal Pitcher has re-entered the game (without being announced) to replace his substitute in the line-up. (Straight positional changes are not classified as substitutions ~ a substitution can only take place if one player replaces another in the batting line-up).

THE UMPIRE SHOULD NOT ALLOW THE ILLEGAL PITCHER TO RETURN TO PITCH - HE SHOULD BE AWARE OF THE ILLEGAL ACTION AT THE TIME THE DEFENSIVE TEAM MAKES THE POSITIONAL CHANGE.

WOMEN JANUARY 4-11 HOBART	U16 BOYS JANUARY 5-11 MELBOURNE	OLYMPIC YOUTH FESTIVAL U19 WOMEN JANUARY 5-12 SYDNEY	U16 GIRLS JANUARY 12-18 ADELAIDE
<i>Tournament Chief Umpire</i> McAuliffe, Alan SA 8	<i>Tournament Chief Umpire</i> Rindfleish, Andrew NSW 8	<i>Tournament Chief Umpire</i> Koskelainen, Margo VIC 8	<i>Tournament Chief Umpire</i> McAuliffe, John SA 8
<i>Examiners:</i> Connolly, Toula SA 8 Grove, Debbie VIC 6	<i>Examiners:</i> Larter, John VIC Gowty, Matt NSW 8		<i>Examiners:</i> Larter, John VIC Shephard, Darrell NSW 6
<i>Umpires:</i> Broomhall, Kevin VIC 6 Greggs, Amanda NSW 5 Keogh, Debbie VIC 6 McCahon, Bruce NSW 6 McCauley, Damien KI 6 Rindfleish, Scott NSW 5 Toft, Mark QLD 6	<i>Umpires:</i> Boyle, Graeme NSW 5 Harrison, Ross NSW 5 James, George VIC 6 Richardson, Peter WA 6 Tannebring, Kevin SA 5 Thomas, Frank QLD 5 Whitehead, Lindsay VIC 6	<i>Umpires:</i> Culpitt, Ken ACT 8 Evans, Leigh VIC 6 Franklin, Kerry VIC 6 Itzstein, Sue NSW 6 Lawrance, Neville SA 7 Waller, Diane VIC 6 <i>Casual: [1 day]</i> Shephard, Darrell NSW 6 Crowe, David NSW 6	<i>Umpires:</i> Baker, Greg NSW 6 Bancroft, Graham WA 6 Crowe, Nicole NSW 5 Kahler, Yvonne QLD 5 Keogh, Debbie VIC 6 McCauley, Damien KI 6 Robinson, Raelene SA 6
<i>Candidates:</i> Freeman, Lisa NSW 5 Pittman, Robyn QLD 5	<i>Candidates</i> Duff, Warren WA 4 Sibraa, Darren QLD 4 <i>Skill Share:</i> Offer, Kevin VIC 4		<i>Candidates</i> Webster, Graeme SA 4 Trow, Ron QLD 4 <i>Skill Share:</i> Lee, Margaret NT 4

U19 WOMEN**JANUARY 18-25****CANBERRA***Tournament Chief Umpire*

Sibraa, Tricia QLD

Examiners:

Culpitt, Denise ACT 6

Grove, Debbie VIC 6

Umpires:

Boyle, Graham NSW 5

Dawson, Rod, SA 5

Frame, Ian QLD 5

Itzstein, Sue NSW 6

Maass, Betty WA 5

Richardson, Julie WA 6

Waller, Diane VIC 6

Candidates

Davis, Col NSW 4

Houison, Ron VIC 4

Skill Share:

Randall, Heather NSW 4

U19 MEN**JANUARY 18-25****SYDNEY***Tournament Chief Umpire*

Culpitt, Ken ACT

Examiners:

Crowe, David NSW 6

Lawrance, Neville SA 7

Umpires:

Baker, Greg NSW 6

Broomhall, Kevin VIC 6

Chapman, Andrew NSW 5

James, George VIC 6

Rindfleish, Andrew NSW 8

Rindfleish, Scott NSW 5

Toft, Mark QLD 6

Candidates

Bunston, Ian QLD 4

Turnbull, Martin ACT 4

U19 MEN AUST v JAPAN TEST SERIES**JANUARY 28-30****SYDNEY***Tournament Chief Umpire***Margo Koskelainen VIC***Umpires:***Freeman, Lisa NSW 5****Itzstein, Sue NSW 6****McCahon, Bruce NSW 6****Rindfleish, Andrew NSW 8****Rindfleish, Scott NSW 5****Shephard, Darrell NSW 6****MEN****MARCH 8-15****BRISBANE***Tournament Chief Umpire*

Koskelainen, Margo VIC

Examiners:

Culpitt, Ken ACT 8

Rindfleish, Andrew NSW 8

Umpires:

Bancroft, Graham WA 6

Evans, Leigh VIC 6

Franklin, Kerry VIC 6

Grove, Debbie VIC 6

James, George VIC 6

McCauley, Damien KI 6

Tamaki, Wiremu NZ

Toft, Mark QLD 6

Candidates:

Thomas, Frank QLD 5

Waller, Phil VIC 5

2003—National Appointments

~~As you can see there are a number of appointments going on in January and March. This is Version One and as we have experienced in previous years there may be changes. If any changes are made Blue's News On-Line will endeavour to print them as they come available.~~

Congratulations to all the candidates for their respective appointments, especially those who are going to their first Nationals as a Level 5 Candidate. I know the family of Blues are right behind you in your quest to become a National umpire.

Personally speaking, I know that officiating at Nationals is a yearly highlight for me and it's the comradeship that makes all the difference.

Good luck everyone and I hope to catch up with most of you at the Masters in Melbourne.

Tofty

Letters to the Editor

The following letter is from National Umpire Graham Bancroft (Level 6) who got 99 percent in this year's umpire's examination.

In the last edition of BNOL I requested Graham to inform everyone which question he got wrong and this was his reply. We thank Graham for taking the time to reply.

The question in question is 77.

Mark,

This question took me the longest of the whole exam. I got it right 3 or 4 years ago, I should have gone with my first thoughts, BUT I could not think of any one time I would not eject a person for 'unsportsmanlike conduct'.

The result of the exam question has given me the best solution to conduct problems, whereby the State League competition requires a tribunal for any 'ejections', I will forever more 'remove' a player, let him play up as a coach, then eject, this should give the tribunal more ammunition to use in penalising the offender.

Yes, I blew it, my best chance at the magic 'ton'.

Graham Bancroft

Letter from ITZY

New South Wales Softball umpires **CELEBRATE!!** As two of their most respected members reach the pinnacle in their field with Andrew Rindfleish and Matt Gowty being awarded their level 8 umpiring accreditation. Being a first and second for New South Wales.

Some of Andrew's achievements are: World Series x 4; 1991 Junior Girls; 1996 Senior Men; 2000 Senior Men and 2001 Junior Boys. Andrew's support to all levels of umpire's not only in New South Wales but also the rest of the country is second to none and while this recognition might have been a long time in coming it is truly deserved.

Matt's achievements include: World Series x 4; 1997 Junior Boys; 2000 Senior Men; 2001 Junior Boys and 2002 Senior Women. I suppose nearly every state in the Country could lay claim to Matt as there own, however since relocating, New South Wales has adopted him as their own.

It is interesting to note that both Andrew and Matt are the quite achievers and both display a humble exterior while always showing the utmost respect for everyone involved in the game of Softball. Both have been involved with umpiring in excess of 20 years.

Congratulations to you both and we look forward to working with you for many years to come, we are very proud of you.

Sue Itzstein Secretary NSW SUA

The following letter was sent to BNOL by the National Director, Margo Koskelainen.

12 September, 2002

Neville Lawrance
Matt Gowty
Andrew Rindfleish

Dear

I advise that the Board of Management of Softball Australia has endorsed the National Umpiring Committee's recommendation that you be awarded Level [7] [8] accreditation.

The National Umpiring Committee's recommendation follows acknowledgment of not only your continuing commitment to ongoing exemplary personal practical performance, but umpire management and education at both State and National levels over a number of years and your work promoting the National Umpire Program while on international assignment.

The National Umpiring Committee and Staff extend their sincerest congratulations on this significant achievement.

On a personal note, please accept my congratulations and also my heartfelt thanks for the work you have done for the Australian Umpire Program over the years. Without umpires such as you, our National Umpire Program would not be where it is today, acknowledged as one of the best in the world.

Once again our heartfelt and sincerest congratulations and I look forward to your continued involvement in the National Umpire Program in the future.

Kind regards,

Margo Koskelainen.
National Umpire-in-Chief

Men's five most feared questions

Men's five most feared questions:

1. What are you thinking about?
2. Do you love me?
3. Do I look fat?
4. Do you think she is prettier than me?
5. What would you do if I died?

What makes these questions so difficult is that every one is guaranteed to explode into a major argument if the man answers incorrectly (i.e. tells the truth).

Therefore, as a public service, each question is analysed below along with possible responses.

Question #1: What are you thinking about?

The proper answer to this, of course, is: "I'm sorry if I have been a bit pensive darling. I was just reflecting on what a warm, wonderful, thoughtful, caring, intelligent woman you are, and how lucky I am to have met you."

This response obviously bears no resemblance to the true answer, which most likely is one of the following:

- a. Nothing
- b. Football
- c. Jennifer Lopez
- d. How fat you are
- e. How would I spend the insurance money if you died

Perhaps the best response to this question was offered by Al Bundy, who once told Peg, "If I wanted you to know what I was thinking, I would be talking to you."

Question #2: Do you love me?

The proper response is: "YES" or, if you feel a more detailed answer is necessary, "Yes, dear." Inappropriate responses include:

- a. Oh yeah, lots.
- b. Would it make you feel better if I said yes?
- c. That depends on what you mean by love.
- d. Does it matter?
- e. Who, me?

Question #3: Do I look fat?

The correct answer is an emphatic: "Of course not!!!"

Among the incorrect answers are:

- a. Compared to what?
- b. I wouldn't call you fat, but you're not exactly thin.
- c. A little extra weight looks good on you.
- d. I've seen fatter.
- e. Could you repeat the question? I was just thinking about how I would spend the insurance money if you died.

Question #4: Do you think she is prettier than me?

Once again, the proper response is an emphatic: "Of course not!!!"

Incorrect responses include:

- a. Yes but you have a better personality.
- b. Not prettier, but definitely thinner.
- c. Not as pretty as you when you were her age.
- d. Define "pretty".
- e. Could you repeat the question? I was just thinking about how I would spend the insurance money if you died.

Question #5: What would you do if I died?

A definite no-win question. (The real answer of course is "Buy a Ferrari and a boat") No matter how you answer this, be prepared for at least an hour of follow up questions, usually along these lines:

WOMAN: Would you get married again?

MAN: Definitely not!

WOMAN: Why not? Don't you like being married?

MAN: Of course I do.

WOMAN: Then why wouldn't you remarry?

MAN: Okay, I'd get married again.

WOMAN: You would? (With a hurt look on her face)

MAN: (Makes audible groan)

WOMAN: Would you sleep with her in our bed?

MAN: Where else would we sleep?

WOMAN: Would you put away my pictures and replace them with pictures of her?

MAN: That would seem the proper thing to do.

WOMAN: And would you let her use my golf clubs?

MAN: She can't. She's left-handed.

WOMAN: ...silence...

MAN: Doh!!!

2002 Australian Basic Paper Report

Staff Member – David Crowe

The 2002 Basic Theory Examination was completed and distributed by the end of April 2002. My thanks are extended to John Larter for his assistance in proofing the document and making several pertinent suggestions regarding rule coverage.

The distribution of the paper was completed electronically, being emailed directly to all SDU's.

Alan McAuliffe contacted me in June regarding concern over an incorrect answer as well as a comment regarding the format of the Paper. Both of Alan's points were addressed and amended copies of the Examination were forwarded on to all SDU's. I wish to apologise now to John Larter who had actually identified this error during the proofing process, unfortunately it was my oversight that did not pick up the error as advised by John.

The first real opportunity that I have to analysis and review the use of the Paper is quite often when I read each State's reports. At the time of writing this document I am aware of the following statistics:

ACT (2), NSW (145), SA (73), VIC (39), & WA (12)

As stated in Darrell's report, the usage of the Paper in NSW is quite a lot more wide spread than he believed previously. Several affiliates had been using the Paper but had not forwarded results to the State committee. It would be expected that similar results would be found in other States.

I am aware of the increasing number of 'junior blues' programs occurring across the nation. It would be hoped that people conducting these program would be utilising this Paper rather than the Australian Exam to introduce novice umpires to the rules of softball.

Education of the affiliates regarding the use of the Paper is an issue I believe requires the attention of every State committee. Consider how many people in each affiliate who sat for the Australian Theory Examination did not achieve a 50% pass mark. Is it likely that each of those people will sit for the exam in 2003???

I would encourage each State to contact the venues in their State that currently do not use the Basic Examination and explain to them the benefits of using the Paper and the potential that it provides for retention and development of new umpires.

The 2003 Basic Theory Examination will be prepared in two formats. The first in the style that has been used for the past three years (i.e. four parts), as well as complete 100 question paper that can be sat for on one night. It is planned at this stage to devote one section (25 questions) to the new rules, therefore requiring the rest of the Rule Book to be covered in the other 75 questions.

David Crowe – National Staff

Letters to the Editor

The following was sent to BNOL by CPL Dani Moffitt.

Tofty,

After reading you article "Don't forget the ones you love", here is something you may wish to pass onto all your umpiring friends.

Thanks

Dani

"Imagine life as a game in which you are juggling some five balls in the air. You name them -- work, family, health, friends and spirit -- and you're keeping all of these in the air. You will soon understand that work is a rubber ball. If you drop it, it will bounce back. But the other four balls -- family, health, friends and spirit -- are made of glass. If you drop one of these, they will be irrevocably scuffed, marked, nicked, damaged, or even shattered. They will never be the same. You must understand that and strive for balance in your life."

Do something about it!

The softball community worldwide is being asked by the **International Softball Federation** to voice their displeasure with the International Olympic Committee's Program Commission's recommendation to **drop softball from the 2008 Olympic program in Beijing**.

(http://www.internationalsoftball.com/aug_30.html)

Go to the page at the IOC web site where fans, players, coaches, umpires, and all of those connected to the sport can click on Public Suggestions and complete the electronic forms that will allow them to register their support of softball in the Summer Games.

(<http://www.suggestions.olympic.org/question-intro.aspx?LN=EN>)

Please pass this message on to all involved in Softball in your address book or post it on any bulletin board or mailing list that you have access to!

Announcement of the Vivienne Triplett—Umpire of year Award

The Vivienne Triplett—Umpire of the year Award will be announced at the Softball Australia Awards of Excellence Dinner in Canberra on October 26, 2002.

SOFTBALL CONFIDENT IN ITS PLACE IN THE OLYMPICS

Don Porter, President of the International Softball Federation (ISF), commented today on the International Olympic Committee's (IOC) Program Commission's recommendation to drop three sports from the 2008 Olympic program in Beijing, including softball.

The Federation, the international governing body for the sport, also provided an analysis to complement those remarks, in testimony to the sport's place in the Olympics.

"It's important to realize that this is only a recommendation, not a conclusion," Mr. Porter said. "We intend to continue our ongoing efforts to promote our sport and all its successes around the world so that everyone the voting IOC members included will see that our information shows this recommendation to be a uninformed one. I certainly question the train of thought behind taking out a women's sport, which is what the IOC has supported."

At least half of the ISF umpires are female; 37% of the ISF's member federations have a female President and/or Secretary General; and 120 women play softball in Olympics. Mr. Porter also boasts of the ISF's Anti-Doping Program, pointing out that since the inception of softball in international and Olympic competition, the sport has not had one positive test.

Mr. Porter added that, "We are obviously disappointed by this news. At the same time, we overcame not even being in the Olympics, so I'm certainly convinced that we'll maintain that place for 2008 and beyond by attacking this challenge head-on.

Contrary to what attempts to eliminate sports from the Olympics would imply, we are not at the bottom of any lists that would support such an action. One need only look at the numbers and the facts and there will be no doubt that we're a solid Olympic sport."

Softball ranked in the top ten in attendance out of the 28 sports at the 2000 Olympics, with a total that was just over 50% more than the sell-out crowds attracted at softball's Olympic debut in 1996.

Furthermore, the television exposure given to the sport at the Games in Sydney ranked in the top 15 of the 28 sports. And, in between the '96 and '00 Games, the ISF had TV coverage of a marquee event, the IX Women's World Championship in 1998 in Japan, whose previous occurrence (1994) had been broadcast to more than 38 million people.

The ISF ranks in the top half of the summer international federations in terms of membership (number of national federations) with 124.

Presently, close to six million athletes play softball. The ISF organizes and conducts among numerous other competitions world championships in women's, men's, junior women's, and junior men's play, and softball is on the program of more than a dozen multi-sport games.

The recently concluded ISF X Women's World Championship in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan (Canada) is considered the Federation's best to-date.

Sixteen countries participated and over 50,000 fans attended. The magnitude of the event was also seen in the 100 media credentials issued and 600-plus volunteers. Traffic to the ISF website tripled during the event, compared to the weeks prior.

Mr. Porter pointed out the Federation's commitment to growing the sport worldwide, indicating that approximately half of the ISF's annual budget goes toward development.

The ISF distributes softball equipment with a total value of over 200,000 U.S. dollars annually to develop the sport. He also mentioned the ISF's current efforts in helping the Hellenic Amateur Softball Federation develop a team for the 2004 Olympics in Athens, Greece.

The softball community worldwide is being asked to voice their displeasure with the Program Commission's recommendation, via the IOC website. From www.olympic.org, fans, players, coaches, umpires, and all of those connected to the sport can click on Public Suggestions and complete the electronic forms that will allow them to register their support of softball in the Summer Games.

In addition to the IOC, the International Softball Federation, celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2002, is also recognized by the General Association of International Sports Federations (GAISF).

For more information, please contact ISF Director of Communications Bruce Wawrzyniak at brucew@internationalsoftball.com, 813-864-0100, ext. 229

30 August 2002

TO: ISF Member Associations/Federations
FROM: ISF President

2008 Olympic Program

I am taking this opportunity to report to you on recent developments that have emerged from the meetings with the Association of Summer Olympic International Federations (ASOIF) and the IOC Executive Board in Lausanne this past week.

You probably have seen certain media reports mentioning that women's softball as well as several other sports including baseball might possibly be excluded from the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing. We were officially notified by IOC president Jacques Rogge, while, I and ISF secretary general Andy Loechner were in Lausanne, by IOC president Jacques Rogge, that women's softball was one of the sports that the IOC Program Commission has recommended to be excluded from the 2008 Olympic Games.

While we take serious objection to this recommendation we must rationalize the way we should address this important issue for our sport. It is my understanding that the recommendation which was reviewed by the IOC Executive Board in Lausanne this past week would be placed on the agenda to be addressed at the IOC Session in Mexico City, November 27-30, 2002.

During this time frame we must use our collective wisdom and strategy to convince the IOC members that women's softball should not be a target of exclusion from the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing. You, as members of National Associations/Federations representing our sport must be able to devise a positive approach to the IOC members in your country and their National Olympic Committee that taking a women's sport off the Olympic Program is not the answer to the IOC wishing to downsize the Program of the Olympic Games.

Additionally, our sport has been most successful at both the Atlanta and Sydney Games in attendance, and media interest, including TV, as well as, other factors that would rate our sport a positive candidate to continue on the Olympic Program. Certainly our world championships and other major competitions (Pan Am Games, Asian Games, Central-American Caribbean

Games, etc.) have also been successful in competitions and have generated as well as great media and spectator interest.

Here at the ISF Secretariat, We now are in the process of developing an comprehensive approach to this recent development that includes highlights our sport's history and the successes of our international competitions as well as in addition to the many other positive factors that have made women's softball a sport that truly meets the

Olympic ideals – those of participation on a universal basis, as well as involving the involvement of the youth of the world, and the ability to while attracting good representation coverage by the sports media, and by the number of spectators who view our competition both in person and on television,, and the coverage of our sport through other communication forms.

We trust that you will bring to the attention of your Association/Federation members including the athletes, coaches, officials and friends of our sport the importance of taking a strong position, and why we should continue in participating in the world's greatest sporting event, the Olympic Games.

Regards to all.

International Softball Federation
1900 S. Park Road -Plant City, Florida 33563 USA
Tel.: (1.813) 864 01 00 Fax: (1.813) 864 01 05
Email: isf@internationalsoftball.co

THE BOYS' PRAYER

**Our beer
Which art in bottles
Hallowed be thy sport
Thy will be drunk
I will be drunk
At home as it is in the pub
Give us each day our daily
schooners
And forgive us our spillage
As we forgive those who
spillest against us
And lead us not into the
practice of poofy wine tast-
ing
And deliver us from Tequila
For mine is the bitter
The chicks and the footy
Forever and ever
Barmen.**

THE GIRLS' PRAYER

**Our Cash
Which art on plastic
Hallowed be thy name
Thy Cartier watch
Thy Prada bag
In Myer
As it is in David Jones
Give us each day our Platinum
Amex
And forgive us our overdraft
As we forgive those who stop our
Mastercard
And lead us not into Katies
And deliver us from Sussans
For thine is the Dinnigan, the Akira
and the Armani
For Chanel No.5 and Eternity
Amex.**

2002 Micronesian Games

With David Crowe

Kaselihie – hello

After years of offering to carry Alan's bags on his next tropic tour it has finally happened. During the end of July, Alan McAuliffe and I had the pleasure of flying off to a mid-Pacific tropical island for two weeks of softball, martinis, hula dancers and perfect weather. It would be like a dream come true...

Now for a reality check! The destination of Pohnpei is in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, we did have about 10 days of softball, Bud Light Beer was the closest we came to a martini, and as for hula dancing; well we did see some men in big black boots doing an Irish jig one day. All in all a great trip.

Every four years the island nations and states of the mid-Pacific come together to celebrate the Micronesian Games. This year the host venue was Pohnpei. A range of sports are contested ranging from softball, baseball, athletics, tennis and basketball, through to outrigger canoeing, spear fishing and Micronesia All-rounder (combination of swimming, spear fishing, palm tree climbing and coconut husking).

To assist in the conduct of the Games support is provided by numerous international sporting bodies, corporate sponsors and the Australian Government. The nations/ States involved in this year's Games included Guam, Yap, Chuuk, the Marianna Islands, Palau, Pohnpei, Marshall Islands, Kosrae and Kiribati. Look them up on an atlas – you'll be surprised how far these athletes travel for their competition.

The softball field would have to be one of the prettiest I have ever been one. Named the "Spanish Wall Softball Field", the outfield fence from left to centre field is an actual 500-year-old wall built by Spanish settlers. At sunset, the sky glows pink and the floodlights would reflect off the sand and coral spread across the diamond. It was not unusual to leave the diamond with several considerable chunks of coral or shell in my pocket.

The actual softball varied greatly with the females playing Slow Pitch and the guys playing Fast. The variation in actual playing abilities matched that of the experience of the umpires officiating on the games. On a practical side, I do not think I have had to be so aware of plays off the ball as much as I did over this event. You never knew where the play was going to go and where the other umpires were at times.

I could go on for pages about the time spent on the island but space will not permit. I will finish up with some dot points of things that occurred (use your imagination).

Landing in a 737 on the shortest runway I've ever seen – plane jack knifing to stay on the tarmac and not the Pacific.

Calling my first ever real game of slow pitch.
Umpiring in 95 % humidity.
Sweeping and raking the field in full umpiring blues.
Watching big Al chase after foul balls and getting them off locals.
Tip: Don't eat 500mls of ice-cream before running a base.
When a sign in the Pacific says "Rough Road Ahead" believe it.
Drinks with the Australian Ambassador – nice sashimi.
There is a beer worse than Bud Light – its called Rainier.

All in all a pretty amazing experience and one that I hope I get to try again some time soon. The next Micronesian Games will be held on Yap in 2006 (the Senator of Yap has already extended an invitation to Al and myself to come back)

...anyone want to carry our bags???

QUEENSLAND BLUES beat the heat at Queensland Titles

Queensland Blues have had a busy month officiating at its Men's Queensland Cup, Open Men's Championships (Toowoomba), Under 19 Men's (Redlands) and the Under 19 Women's Championships (Ipswich)

With a distinct lack of numbers for the Under 19s it was difficult to look after the umpires with some doing 3 to 4 games a day. Two members of the crew at Redlands were sent to Ipswich on Day 2 of the Championships due to injuries to a couple of Blues.

For anyone who knows Queensland heat, especially at Ipswich, the Blue's were really doing it tough in difficult conditions.

Successful Candidates - Level 3 - David Casey (Wynnum), Spence Williams (Bundaberg)

Finals Appointments

Queensland Cup - Frank Thomas, Darren Sibraa, Graham Skachill

Open Men's - Ron Trow, Ian Bunston, Danny Griffiths

President's Cup - Steve Gutteridge, Yvonne Kahler, Jamie Harries

Under 19 Men - Darren Sibraa, Mark Toft, Garry Pitman

President's Cup - Mike Williamson, Ian Bunston, Ray Warwick

Under 19 Women - Ian Goodman, Ron Yardley, Robert Dumma

President's Cup - Rick Gill, David Casey, Brian Thomas,

Darren Sibraa and Ron Trow braved the heat to officiate at the Mount Isa Finals also in September. What a great work out for the two new Level 5 candidates.

WANTED.....UMPIRES TO WRITE AN ARTICLE FOR BLUES NEW ON-LINE

Dear Umpires,

Feedback from umpires across the country has shown that Blues News On-Line is appreciated and well received. In Fact, when it is late or not received, we hear about it.

Probably the most difficult problem we continue to face in publishing BNOL is a shortage of articles. As officials you have the experience, advice and stories that umpires across the country could find to be very valuable reading.

The stories that you've told, the advice you've heard or have passed to others, and the most important points you've shared about rules, mechanics, positioning, game management could probably fill several volumes of this magazine.

Too often, the hardest part of writing is beginning. Every writer or would-be writer has stared at a blank page or computer screen and wondered, "How do I start?"

Below I have listed a few possible topics for columns and then an introduction to the article you are about to write.

I hope you take up the challenge and put pen to paper or is it fingers to keyboard these days.

Topics for Columns

- The Best Advice I Was Ever Given
- Funniest Thing I've Ever Seen in a Ball Game
- An Important thing to Know About.....
- What's The Call?
- Why the Mechanic Is.....
- When We Were in We had So Much Fun
- The Best Game I was Involved In

Possible starting sentences....

The best advice I was ever given

- The best advice I was ever given cam from.....
- Over the years I've been helped by a lot of good umpires
- If I was to pick out one piece of advice that's stuck with me and made me a better umpire, would be
- I'll never forget the time told me.....it's the best advice I have ever received

Funniest thing I've ever seen in a ball game

- Just when I thought I've seen everything...
- I've been around a long time but even I was surprised when.....
- I thought I'd wet myself the time.....

An important thing to know about

- If there is one thing to keep in mind about, its...
- You know when Happens, it's really important to.....
-doesn't happen very often, but when it does, you really have to remember to.....

If even one out of every 20 umpires gave us an article on the "Best advice I was ever given" we would have nearly a hundred articles right there! Imagine the magazine's content if we could get every umpire to write on one or more subjects, it would surely make BNOL a better read, don't you think?

Once you get started, most articles will only take between 30 to 60 minutes to write. As a valuable member of the National Umpiring Program it is important that you consider to assist in keeping BNOL informative, humorous and in particular worth reading.

All articles will of course be screened before publication. Just remember Blues News On-Line is a publication written by umpires for umpires and your contributions would be very much appreciated.

I look forward to hearing from you in the very near future.

Regards,

Mark Toft (BNOL Editor)

SEND CONTRIBUTIONS TO - mtoft@ozemail.com.au